



Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
PERMITTING SERVICES

APRIL 2005



Robert C. Hubbard
Director

IMPACT TAXES & DPS FEES TO INCREASE **JULY 1, 2005**

Impact taxes and the fees that support DPS operations are scheduled for increases effective the beginning of fiscal year '06.

The Transportation and School Impact Taxes will be adjusted to reflect the average increase in the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers in the Washington-Baltimore metropolitan area. The new tax rates will be determined by the County Director of Finance, who must adjust the tax rates on July 1 of each odd-numbered year by the changes in the annual, or any successor index, for the two most recent calendar years. The Director must calculate the adjustment to the nearest multiple of five cents for rates per square foot of gross floor area, or one dollar for rates per dwelling unit. The new rates will be published in the May, 2005, edition of the Montgomery County Register.

DPS fees will increase by 6.4% to cover higher costs associated with negotiated labor agreements, employee-benefit cost adjustments, proficiency advancements, and other personnel-related factors. DPS may raise fees annually by a percentage that does not exceed the rate of the increase (if any) in the department's approved personnel costs for the then-current fiscal year compared to the approved personnel costs for the preceding year. Permit applications and requests for extensions and revisions received on and after July 1, 2005, will be subject to the new fees.

COUNTY ADOPTS NEW NEC AND IBC CODES **EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 2005**

Montgomery County has adopted amended versions of the 2003 editions of the International Building, Residential, Fuel-Gas, Mechanical, and Energy Conservation Codes, as well as the 2002 edition of the National Electrical Code ("NEC"). Copies of the amendments are available on our web site at <http://permittingservices.montgomerycountymd.gov>.

In order to facilitate the transition to the new codes, DPS is providing a two-month administrative grace period. This means that applicants will be permitted to apply for permits under previous editions of the codes (i.e., the 2000 edition for all codes except the NEC, to which the 1996 edition will apply) until May 31, 2004.

On May 4, 2005, DPS and the MNCBIA are sponsoring a seminar about the new codes. See the seminar announcement in this issue.



AS I SEE IT ...
by DPS DIRECTOR
ROBERT HUBBARD

DPS is in the home stretch of the County's budget process. The County Executive approved our FY '06 budget, and we're awaiting final action by the County Council to establish our funding level for next fiscal year.

DPS is enterprise funded, which means that virtually all of our revenue comes from the fees that our customers pay. Major issues for structuring our budget are the Permitting Services Fund and the fund balance. We are required to maintain a contingency fund, the fund balance, as insurance against the volatility of the construction index. We have been fortunate to have had the support of our client base on matters pertaining to our fee structure and the need for periodic fee increases.

Due to escalating labor and benefit costs, revenues, while strong, have not kept pace with expenditures. Accordingly, the department is faced with the dilemma of having to either increase fees to preserve services or decrease service levels. Since the demand for permitting services has been on the rise, we are disinclined to reduce them and have opted instead to increase fees by 6.4% to maintain current service levels. In addition, we are revising our fee regulations to allow DPS to increase fees on a fiscal-year basis up to the amount of labor-cost increases negotiated between the County and the em-

ployees' union. This makes sound fiscal sense, because labor costs make up 80% of our budget.

Although we are not increasing our complement of positions next fiscal year, I have proposed a restructuring of my office that will eliminate two staff positions and create two line positions. I am abolishing the positions of Assistant Director and Program Manager for human resources. The incumbents are, respectively, two long-term County employees, Bill Boyajy and Linda Cutsail, both of whom will be retiring this summer. I will miss them as co-workers, but I look forward to our continuing friendship. Bill and Linda played key roles in the creation and management of DPS, and I thank them for their unrelenting commitment and dedication to our department and its internal and external customers. Please join me in wishing them the best in retirement.

With the abolishment of these two positions, I am creating a Permitting Services Specialist III in the Zoning Plan Review unit and a Permitting Services Inspector III in the Residential Building Inspection unit. These position creations will have a positive impact on building-permit-approval times and the quality of residential inspections.

Budget preparation begins anew each September. I encourage you to contact me with any suggestions that you might have for structuring our fees/improving our operations.



Maryland-National Capital Building Industry Association



International Residential Code 2003

*Presented by Montgomery County
Department of Permitting Services*

Education Partner



Wednesday, May 4, 2005

The following topics will be covered:

- ◆ Major code changes in the International Residential Code 2003
- ◆ Overview of Local Amendments
- ◆ Plan Review Process (what's missing on documents)
- ◆ Inspection Process (what are the most occurring disapprovals)
- ◆ DPS web site info relevant to Building Construction Standards
- ◆ Code Modification Process
- ◆ Question & Answer Session

Approved for 3 hours AIA Continuing Education earning units with Health, Safety & Welfare

MNCBIA Presents -International Residential Code 2003

Wednesday, May 4, 2005

Gudelsky Institute (Room 222-224) Montgomery College - Rockville Campus

Registration - 7:45 am Seminar - 8:00 am - 11:00 am

\$125.00 Member Rate \$175.00 Non-Member Rate

(Includes individual copy of the IRC 2003 Code Book & light continental breakfast)

Company Name _____ Attendee: _____

Street Address: _____ Attendee: _____

City, State & Zip: _____ Attendee: _____

Contact: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Payment by: ☐ Check ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard

Account #

Expiration Date: -

Signature: _____ Name on Card: _____

Directions to Gudelsky Institute at Montgomery College

From the north: Take I-270 South to Exit 6, Route 28, W. Montgomery Ave./Rockville. Then take Exit 6A, Route 28 East. Turn left at first traffic light onto Nelson Street. Go to first traffic light at Mannakee Street; turn left. *Follow Mannakee to light at Hungerford Dr. Make left onto Hungerford and at 1st light make left onto N. Campus Dr. Gudelsky Institute on left - park in 1st lot on right (*ignore Permit Parking only sign*). Enter main entrance of building - take elevator/stairs to second floor to Room 222-224.

From the South: Take I-495 to, I-270 North/Frederick. Exit on 6A, Route 28, W. Montgomery Ave./Rockville stay left following signs for Montgomery College/Nelson St. Go through traffic light - crossing over 28 (road becomes Nelson Street). Go to first traffic light at Mannakee Street; turn left. Follow Mannakee to light at Hungerford Dr. Make left onto Hungerford Dr. and at 1st light make left onto N. Campus Dr. Gudelsky Institute on left - park in 1st lot on right (*ignore Permit Parking only sign*). Enter main entrance of building - take elevator/stairs to second floor to Room 222-224.

Make checks payable & return to:
MNCBIA, 1738 Elton Rd.,
#200 Silver Spring, MD 20903

Fax: 301-445-5499

No cancellations after
April 27, 2005

Questions contact Amy
Weinberg, Mgr Member
Services at 301-445-5405

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

HELP US HELP YOU AVOID ELEC- TRICAL-PLAN-REVIEW BACKLOGS

Why do some plans have a flow to them that make for a less time-consuming review than others, even if they contain mistakes or incorrect values? Although, it is hard to point out all of the things that create a good plan, we'll give it a try here:

One thing that seems to help considerably is a complete but simple riser diagram. By "simple," we mean one that contains the basic information that a reviewer is looking for in a logical format without a lot of extra information. Additional information should be shown in the corresponding legends. A well-designed riser diagram can convey a large amount of information quickly and efficiently.

Another simple improvement that is being used by a small but growing number of engineers is a conductor symbol that shows the conductor ampacity rating of a feeder or branch circuit. The symbol relieves the reviewer from having to wade through irrelevant details in the legend; such as the number of conductors, the grounding conductor, and the type and size of conduit or cable; in order to get the amperage.

For example, a circled "100" next to a feeder might be used to indicate that the conductor was rated for 100 amperes. If the reviewer were to consult the legend

for the notation, he or she might see:

100 = 4 #2 cu conductors @ 75 degree C in 2" EMT conduit

100-g = 4 #2 cu conductors @ 75 degree C with 1 #8 grounding conductor in 2" PVC conduit

100 d = 4 #1 cu conductors @ 75 degree C in 2" EMT conduit (In this case, the conductor was over-sized to compensate for a voltage drop due to the length of the run.)

Here, the symbol would have given the reviewer the amperage and made it unnecessary for him or her to consult the legend.

It would also be helpful if riser disconnects; switches; panels; "xfmr's," whether of the fused or circuit-breaker type; and other core elements of an electrical system typically shown on risers as squares or rectangles were sized large enough to include a description of the element. This practice would relieve the reviewer of having to page through the plans for panel schedules to find the descriptions.

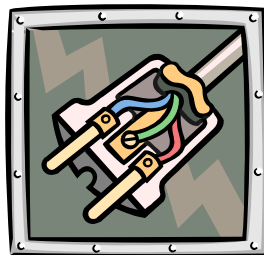
Examples of this notation are as follows: "100a non-fused 277v Sw. or 200a /175a fused 208v Dis., 600a 277/480 xfer sw., PP1 400a MLO, LP3 w/200a MCB, 75K XFMR Pri 277/480 Sec. 120/208 Grd #2cu."

Panel schedules should include circuit-breaker sizes for equipment served, the "kw" rating or ampacity of the equipment served, and the feeder or branch-circuit conductor size.

Show us the calculations that justify the added load when you have increased loads to existing equipment.

Include your derating calculations when you have used derating factors for distribution and equipment such as apartment or strip-center meter banks.

We appreciate your willingness to work with us to improve the electrical plan-review process.



REQUIREMENTS FOR EXISTING RESIDENTIAL SPRINKLERING

Did you know that, when you alter or add to a single-family dwelling or townhouse that is sprinklered, you may need a sprinkler permit in addition to the required building, electrical and mechanical permits? First, any alteration to an existing building that affects the coverage of the existing sprinkler head(s) may require a redesign. Second, any addition to an existing sprinklered dwelling must also be sprinklered.

A fire-protection permit (“FPP”) is required for all sprinkler work in the County. FPP’s are issued only to sprinkler contractors licensed in both the State of Maryland and Montgomery County.

DPS plan review is not required for changes affecting no more than one sprin-

kler head. However, the permit holder must provide a copy of the “Contractor’s Certificate of Above-Ground Piping” (see NFPA 13 2002 edition, Figure 16.1, pg. 190) to the homeowner and to the DPS inspector at the close-in inspection. The County Fire Marshal (“CFM”) does not inspect these changes.

DPS plan review is required for changes affecting two or more sprinkler heads. The permit holder must undertake a hydrostatic test witnessed by the CFM, and the CFM must perform a final inspection. The DPS inspector will approve the building close-in after the CFM approves the hydrostatic test and the final inspection of the permitted changes.

Please note that area coverage per sprinkler head, the residential-sprinkler-head type, and the orifice temperature rating and spacing must be compatible with the existing system.

SUBMITTAL GUIDELINES FOR FIRE PLANS

To aid contractors in determining what information is required on sprinkler and fire-alarm-systems plans, DPS has three hand-outs entitled, “Requirements For The Submittal Of Sprinkler And Standpipe Plans NFPA 13, 13R, And 14 Systems,”

“Requirements For The Submittal of Residential Sprinkler NFPA 13D Systems,” and “Requirements For The Submittal of Fire Alarm Systems.” All of these documents may be obtained by visiting our offices at 255 Rockville Pike, 2nd Floor, in Rockville, or by accessing our website at <http://permittingservices.montgomerycountymd.gov>.

The documents, which we believe will help our clients to produce quality plans, address the following submittal issues:

- Permit Procedures
- General Submittal Requirements
- Information Required On Drawings
- Information Required in Calculations
- Requirements For Equipment Catalog Cut Submittals
- Wiring Diagram Requirements
- Riser Diagram Requirements
- Information Required In Sequence-Of-Operations Descriptions
- Information Required In Battery Calculations
- Information Required In Circuit Calculations

Questions concerning the contents of these documents should be directed to 240 777-6200.

LAND DEVELOPMENT

QUALITY OF PLANS FOR SEDIMENT-CONTROL REVIEW

Most sediment-control-permit applications must include detailed sediment-control and stormwater-management construction plans and all supporting design computations. Specific submission requirements in the form of checklists can be found on the DPS website.

The use of checklists by design consultants usually results in higher-quality submissions, faster reviews, and quicker permit issuance. Here are some other helpful plan-submission hints:

1. Include only one set of plans with the permit application.
2. Roll the plans for submission. Copies do not have to be folded until after they have been signed and approved.
3. Do not delay working on forest-conservation requirements and obtaining approvals from the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (“MNCPPC”), even if there are no trees on site. Unless MNCPPC approves an exemption, DPS may not issue sediment-control permits without MNCPPC approval of forest-conservation plans. Languishing forest-conservation approval is one of the commonest sources of delay in the approval of sediment-control plans and the issuance of sediment-control permits.
4. Do not delay submitting geotechnical reports, which are often omitted from the application package and which can be critical design and construction documents.
5. Call 240-777-6320 between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to discuss plan-submittal requirements with a Permitting Services Specialist.

We appreciate your commitment to improving the sediment-control permitting process.

WELL-AND-SEPTIC UPDATE

A Quick Glance at Groundwater Heat Pumps

Groundwater heat pumps (“GWHP’s”) are an alternative to the conventional air-to-air heat pumps found in many newer homes. Since these devices entail the use of wells, Well-and-Septic staff must approve their installation.

With a GWHP, heat is extracted from “warm” (50- 55 degree year-round) groundwater and passed into a forced-air heating

system to heat the house in the winter. With a conventional heat pump, heat is extracted out of outdoor air that is typically much colder. In the summer, the GWHP takes heat from the house and pumps it into the “cool” groundwater, and the cooled air is then re-circulated throughout the house. Conventional heat pumps maintain a cool inside temperature by extracting the heat from the house, dispersing it into outdoor air, and then cooling the inside air.

GWHP systems save money by avoiding the combustion of fossil fuels and using less electricity than conventional heat pumps. They are, by their nature, more efficient than any of the air-to-air units.

GWHP's are a form of “geo-thermal” heat pump, of which there are several:

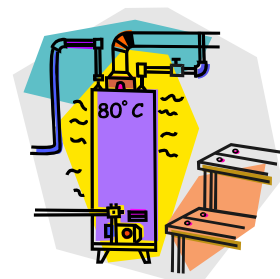
- A. Pond loops (A coil of pipe is “sunk” into a pond.)
- B. Shallow-soil trenches (A horizontal loop is installed several feet below the ground surface.)

C. GWHP's:

1. Open-loop type: A source well and a receiving well are drilled. The groundwater is pumped “one time” through a heat exchanger and then returned to the receiving well. Each well must have a substantial yield, say 15 gallons-per-minute, to make this system work. The state requires a Groundwater Appropriation Permit (“GAP”), and the water must be returned to the same aquifer from which it was withdrawn. This type is rarely used because, in most cases, property owners cannot easily construct two high-yielding wells. Complications may also arise from pumping high volumes of well water through conventional submersible pumps.
2. Closed-loop type: With this most-frequently-employed system, a series of

wells is drilled in a “cluster.” Immediately thereafter, a special “heat sink” pipe is inserted in the bottom of the well, the pipe is returned to the top, and a loop is created. The well bore is sealed with a special grout. The other wells in the cluster are then looped together, thereby making a huge geo-thermal “radiator.” The two ends of the loop system are directed underground into the basement where they are connected to the heat exchanger. A special “food-grade” anti-freeze mixture is pumped thru the loop. It carries heat energy up or down, depending on the season. Some heat-pump units have a device known as a “de-superheater.” This allows the heat in the summer to be “dumped” into the owner’s hot-water heater, thereby saving money. There is no GAP required for this system, and typical well setbacks (a minimum of 50 feet) are relaxed.

3. A relatively new type of groundwater system is called a “Standing Column Well System.” With this system, a single well is used (sometimes the domestic water well). The water for heating/cooling is withdrawn from the top of the well and then returned to the bottom. The well needs to be deep enough so that the water stored in the bore is not over-heated or cooled. Some of these systems “bleed” off processed water during peak demands, so a GAP would be required, as well as a way to return the “bleed water” to the aquifer.



WATER RESOURCES STAFF ACTIVE AT CONFERENCES

Senior Permitting Services Specialists Leo Galanko and Richard Gee have or will make presentations at professional conferences concerning projects in which they have played pivotal roles as Water Resources professionals.

Leo recently served on a panel of experts at the Watershed Protection Institute in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. The panel discussed watershed-protection and land-development standards for the Paint Branch watershed in Montgomery County.

In May, Richard will attend the Association of State Dam Safety Officials' Conference in Cape May, New Jersey, to discuss his work on the Mary Boland Stormwater Management Pond in Germantown.

CASEWORK MANAGEMENT

PAINLESS ZONING REVIEWS

Good news: zoning approval of your permit application does not have to be a painful experience! Please continue reading this article for some helpful information about zoning reviews, especially regarding common errors that appear in permit submissions.

Zoning plan review is an important part of the building-permit process. The Zoning Ordinance determines the location of your building on the lot, the maximum height of the building, the number of stories allowed, and the number of dwelling units per lot.

During the zoning review, your plans will be checked to determine if the proposed construction meets the setbacks and the

height and story requirements for the zone. The reviewer (official title: Permitting Services Specialist ["PSS"]) will examine the established building line and the calculations on your plans for determining if your lowest level will be considered a basement or a cellar and how many additional stories you may have.

Once he or she has completed his or her review, the PSS will provide you with a list of plan deficiencies/omissions. Of course, the re-submission process will protract the permit-approval process.

The commonest reasons for failing a zoning review are:

- The site plans are not engineered or drawn to scale.
- The established-building-line calculations for new construction or front additions in the R-60, R-90, R-150 and R-200 zones are not included with the permit submittal.
- The calculations establishing whether or not the lowest level is a basement or a cellar are not included in the permit submission.
- The calculations showing the height of the proposed construction are not included in the permit submission.
- The site plans are unclear or of poor quality. Site plans should be rendered in black lines on white background and should not include information for storm-water or sediment-control permits.

For more information about zoning plan approval, please read the article in this issue about zoning-review/site-plan requirements for two-story and second-story additions and zoning-review/site-plan requirements for one-story additions, decks & sheds.

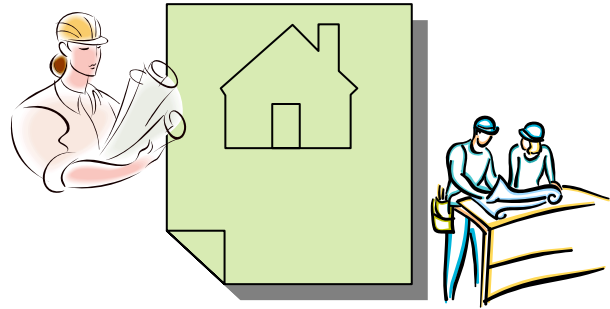
ZONING-REVIEW/SITE-PLAN REQUIREMENTS FOR DECKS, SHEDS, & ONE-STORY ADDITIONS

Unfortunately, permit applications for decks, sheds, and one-story additions are often deficient with respect to zoning-related details on the accompanying plans.

TO HELP DPS PERSONNEL PROCESS YOUR APPLICATION AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, PLEASE BE SURE THAT YOU SUBMIT TWO (2) COPIES OF A SITE PLAN CONTAINING THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

- Scale
- Property lines
- Locations of streets
- Existing and proposed structures properly identified, accurately located and dimensioned
- Other existing and proposed site features, such as sidewalks, steps, porches, driveways, mechanical equipment
- Location, height and area of all structures
- Front, side and rear setbacks of all proposed structures
- Plat number
- Lot coverage (lot area covered by buildings)
- Location and identification of all easements
- Established Building Line information, if proposing an addition on the front of a house in the R-60, R-90, R-150, R-200 zones (This plan MUST be prepared by a Maryland-licensed land surveyor or civil engineer.)

We thank you for your cooperation.



ZONING-REVIEW/SITE-PLAN REQUIREMENTS FOR TWO-STORY AND SECOND-STORY ADDITIONS

The zoning plan review of two-story and second-story additions is often delayed because plan details/accompanying materials are missing or inadequate.

TO HELP DPS PERSONNEL PROCESS YOUR APPLICATION AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, PLEASE BE SURE THAT YOU SUBMIT TWO (2) COPIES OF A SITE PLAN CONTAINING THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

- Scale
- Property lines
- Locations of streets
- Existing and proposed structures properly identified, accurately located and dimensioned
- Other existing and proposed site features, such as sidewalks, steps, porches, driveways, and mechanical equipment
- Location, height, and area of all structures
- Front, side and rear setbacks of all proposed structures
- Plat number
- Lot coverage (lot area covered by buildings)
- Location and identification of all easements

- Established Building Line information, if proposing an addition on the front of a house in the R-60, R-90, R-150, R-200 zones PREPARED BY A MARYLAND-LICENSED LAND SURVEYOR OR CIVIL ENGINEER

IN THE R-40, R-60, and R-90 ZONES, the following information is required to determine Building Height and MUST BE PROVIDED ON DRAWINGS SIGNED AND SEALED BY A MARYLAND-LICENSED LAND SURVEYOR, CIVIL ENGINEER, OR ARCHITECT:

- Existing topography or spot elevations and proposed grading at contour intervals of not more than two feet
- Approved street-grade elevation at the centerline of the street, opposite the middle of the front of the building
- Grade elevations at the basement/cellar slab, the first floor, and at the mean height between the eaves and the roof ridge

A CAUTIONARY TALE ABOUT PHONY INSPECTORS

This month, one of our customers emailed us the following account of an incident that occurred while his building project was under construction:

I would appreciate your alerting your field managers and inspectors to the suspicious activity that transpired here today. While my contractor and two helpers were here, the following happened:

A new white Chevy Trailblazer pulled up with three men, one of whom claimed to be from the county, but did not show ID when

asked. They asked what we were building and how big it was. My contractor said they could talk to me as I was home. They said that wouldn't be necessary because they had copies of my drawings at the office and didn't need any more information from me!!!!

They then proceeded to measure the porch area of the addition and then walked up on my existing deck and looked into the house. When asked again point blank what they wanted, they gave a vague answer about needing a couple measurements and left.

The men were not connected with any of the subs on the job. My assumption is that they were casing my place out looking for a vulnerable place to break into.

I reported this to the police but they obviously need more information such as a license number. We will be vigilant and have a camera ready.

This sad tale points to the blessedly infrequent but alarming phenomenon of scam artists posing as building inspectors. Fortunately, no more came of this incident. However, we want our customers to know that it happened so that they can take precautions against becoming victims of this kind of criminal activity.

DPS inspectors always carry County photographic identification cards and business cards. No one should feel reluctant to ask an inspector to identify him or herself. If you suspect that someone is posing as an inspector, you may ask him or her to leave your property; DPS inspectors are trained to

remove themselves from private property if asked.

Further, it would be unusual for more than one inspector to visit a property. Sometimes, a supervisor will accompany an inspector for consultative purposes, or another inspector may visit to provide a second perspective on a complex issue. But, especially with residential construction, only one inspector completes most of the required reviews.

Should you encounter behavior such as that displayed in the story above, certainly call the police, but please alert our office as well. Our main number is 240 777-6300.



DPS WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEES



(left to right; Calvin Edmiston, Serena James, and David Bowman)

On March 7, 2005, Serena James joined DPS as the Office Services Coordinator in the Division of Casework Management where she will be the principal aide to Division Chief Reggie Jetter. Most recently, Serena managed finance and procurement

and provided long-distance-activity reports to departments as an OSC in the Telecommunications Division of the Department of Telecommunications Services (“DTS”). She also coordinated the production and distribution of the Employee Phone Directory and the Verizon Blue Page listings. Prior to her position with DTS, Serena worked as a Principle Administrative Aide in the County Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Public Information.

David Bowman became a Permitting Services Inspector II in the Sediment-Control/Stormwater-Management Inspection Section of the Division of Land Development on March 21, 2005. David has an Associate’s Degree in Construction Inspection Technology and is an instructor for the Green Card Certification Program in sediment/erosion control. He has many years of experience in the sediment-control/stormwater-management field, most recently as a Construction Standards Inspector with Prince George’s County Department of Environmental Resources.

David arrived on March 21 with his soon-to-be-coworker Permitting Services Inspector II Calvin Edmiston. Calvin came to DPS from the Anne Arundel County Department of Inspections and Permits where he was a Stormwater Management and Erosion Control Inspector. Prior to that, Calvin worked with Macris, Hendricks, and Glascock, PA, as a Civil Engineering and Drafting Technician.

Both David and Calvin report to Permitting Services Manager Mike Reahl.

Welcome to DPS, Serena, David, and Calvin!

PROFICIENCY ADVANCEMENTS



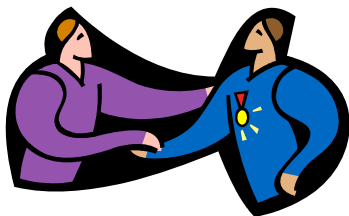
(left to right, Mike Geier and Jeff Mann)

Proficiency advancements are non-competitive promotions that recognize an employee's readiness to assume the duties of the mid-level or highest classification at which his or her position has been budgeted. Most proficiency advancements in DPS require completion of occupationally-specific certification requirements for promotion to the highest classification level. We are pleased to announce that the following employees have been proficiency advanced within their respective positions:

Mike Geier and Jeff Mann of the Division of Land Development have been proficiency advanced to the senior levels in their respective positions.

Mike became a Senior Permitting Services Specialist on February 20, 2005, and Jeff advanced to Permitting Services Inspector III on January 23, 2005.

Please join us in congratulating Mike and Jeff.



DPS INSPECTORS LAUNCH TV CAREERS



Alan Jenkins

Of course, all of our employees are star performers, but two of them recently distinguished themselves in cameo roles on separate episodes of a new television show, "Garage Takeover," on the Discovery Channel.

Permitting Services Inspector Tommy Howes appeared in an episode entitled "The Green Room" on March 15, 2005. Tommy was shown performing an inspection for framing and rough wiring. At first, he found the omnipresent camera to be a little unnerving, but quickly got "into character" and approved all inspections.

And, that was Permitting Services Inspector Allan Jenkins plying his trade in the "Irish Pub" episode that was shown on March 25, 2005. Alan was at a home in Gaithersburg overseeing the conversion of a somewhat untidy garage into habitable space. He inspected the wiring, checked the building egress, looked for pressure-treated lumber, and otherwise assured code-compliance.

As a footnote to this story, it has been reported that DPS zoning inspector Barbara Piczak's father and sister also acquired status as short-lived media stars when they "acted" in the crowd scene at the end of a show aired last October.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: I thought that "Garage Takeover" was a crime melodrama with hostages—who knew?)



Tommy Howes

DPS QUIK PICS

RIDE 'EM, DPS COWGIRL!



DPS Program Manager Linda Cutsail was featured in a recent article in the Washington Post about her avocational interest in cow paraphernalia (We also featured her in past issue of this newsletter.). Here, she's perched on her cow-pied lawn ornament bundled in her traffic-stopping bovine caftan. We're not saying that Linda's obsessed, but she's retiring soon, and we're really going to miss the milk.



Congratulations to Shilong Zheng of our Information Technology Unit! He became a United States citizen on Friday, April 22, 2005.



How some DPSers relax at lunchtime!

Department of Permitting Services
255 Rockville Pike, Second Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850-4166

PRSRT STD
U.S. Postage
PAID PAID
Rockville MD
Permit No. 138

DPS MAIN TELEPHONE NUMBER
(240) 777-6300

(240) 777-6210	To: Schedule an Inspection	Cancel an Inspection	Find the status of a permit	Receive documents via fax
(240) 777-6259	Complaints			
(240) 777-6370	Questions related to residential building permits (new construction, additions, alterations, sheds, decks, fences, swimming pools), commercial building permits, demolition permits, fire-alarm permits, fire-sprinkler permits, Use-and-Occupancy Certificates, and Historic Area Work Permits			
(240) 777-6320	Questions related to subdivision development, permits to work in the right-of-way, stormwater-management concepts, sediment-control permits, and well-and-septic permits			
(240) 777-6240	Questions related to zoning, setbacks, information, building-height restrictions, special exceptions, electrical permits and licenses, mechanical permits, vendor licenses, sign permits, and Permitting Services records			
(240) 777-6260	Division of Casework Management			
(240) 777-6350	Division of Land Development			
(240) 777-6200	Division of Building Construction			
(240) 777-6360	Office of the Director			
(240) 777-6256	TTY			

For information or to be included
on the mailing list, call
240-777-6364

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